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THE
Lessons of Nature and of Life.

A POEM,
DESCRIPTIVE AND HISTORICAL,
WITH NOTES.

BY REV. WILLIAM M^CJIMSEY.



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1867.

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## ANALYSIS OF THE POEM.

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IN TWELVE PARTS.
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- I.—The Sublimity and Beauty of Nature and Tappan Bay and its vicinity.
- II.—Views on Prospect Hill and Point Look-Out.
- III.—The Sleepy Hollow Cemetery.
- IV.—The Ancient Church near the Cemetery.
- V.—The Sleepy Hollow Valley.
- VI.—The Monument respecting the Capture of Major Andre, in the American Revolution.
- VII.—The Union Banner and Pole of Liberty.
- VIII.—The Croton Aqueduct and Scenery around.
- IX.—The Spirit of Improvement, and Tappan Zee.
- X.—The Sublimity and Beauty of Views at a Distance.
- XI.—The Lessons of Life applied to the Promotion of Happiness.
- XII.—The Valedictory Address of the Poem.

# The Sublimity and Beauty of Nature.

## A POEM.

### PART I.—*The Beauties of Nature and Tappan Bay and its vicinity.*

Awake, my harp, awake, and sing  
The pleasures that from Nature spring ;  
Lo ! Seasons come with beauty's flowers,  
To cheer and charm life's passing hours.

Lo ! Spring returns with Nature's charms—  
No more are heard War's loud alarms ;  
Lo ! on the clouds of yonder sky  
The Rainbow shines with peace on high.

Columbia ! how fair thy land !  
Rich with the beautiful and grand ;  
With landscapes bright, and mountains high,  
Thy prospects charm the enraptured eye.

On Hudson's banks stands SUNNYSIDE,  
And by it steamboats splendid glide,  
And scenes of beauty charm the sight,  
Exciting pleasure and delight !

Novelty and variety  
Around the world we often see ;  
Science can their charms portray  
Where'er their scenes and objects lay.

In the lines of pleasing verse,  
Life's scenes and actions we rehearse,  
A habitation and a name  
Are given thus to fields of fame.

When on the landscape 'round we look,  
And take a view of Nature's book,  
Their lessons will improve the heart,  
And joy and pleasure will impart.

What bright associations rise  
 To taste, to memory, and to eyes,  
 With beauty's splendor spread abroad  
 In earth, in heaven, in works of God.

Nature unfolds a pleasing theme  
 Of admiration and esteem ;  
 With light divine life's lessons learn,  
 And Nature's beauties well discern.

Her beauty and her music's sound  
 Give pleasure to life's scenes around ;  
 Go see these beauties with delight,  
 That rise upon the admiring sight.

Behold the Hudson's noble stream,  
 Enlivened by the sun's bright beam ;  
 There sloops, brigs, and schooners go,  
 With ships and steamboats on its flow.

Life, beauty, distance, all impart  
 Instruction to the mind and heart ;  
 Their bright enchantment charms the eyes,  
 In earth, in rivers, and in skies !

## PART II.—*Views on Prospect Hill and Point Look-Out.*

What charming prospects strike the eyes,  
 When on this eminence we rise ;  
 Here we can see the Hudson's flow,  
 As steamboats on its waters go.

Around these hills the observer sees  
 Vast numbers of outspreading trees,  
 That verdant through the seasons grow,  
 With Summer's heat and Winter's snow.

See garden's flowers and verdant trees  
 In motion from a gentle breeze ;  
 The wild flowers, too, can often yield  
 Delight to wanderers in the field.

Go look with Inspiration's eyes  
 On earth, on ocean, and on skies ;  
 The impression made upon the soul  
 Will be—God actuates the whole !

With beauty flows the Hudson's stream,  
 The sun shines out with splendid beam ;  
 The moon and stars so clear by night,  
 Give to the heart joy and delight.

On Hudson's banks the willows grow,  
 Its charming waters ebb and flow ;  
 The moonbeams shine with splendor bright,  
 And spread a charm on Autumn's night.

Our minds can look with cheerful eyes  
 Upon these scenes of earth and skies,  
 And feel the truth that here we see  
 The impress of Divinity !

Bright Tappan Bay extends full wide  
 Where rolls the Hudson's flowing tide ;  
 The scenes of beauty spread around  
 And here is heard sweet Music's sound.

The locust trees white blossoms bear,  
 And spread their fragrance on the air ;  
 The wild flowers round with beauty rise,  
 And with attraction draw the eyes !



### PART III.—*The Sleepy Hollow Cemetery.*

Here SLEEPY HOLLOW lies around,  
 Wide on the air is heard the sound  
 Of rail-cars running on their way,  
 Both in the night and through the day.

SLEEPY HOLLOW spreads wide all round,  
 Enlivened by the echo's sound,  
 Its prospects, scenes and objects show,  
 And on its rocks the brook's streams flow.

KINGSLAND'S POINT appears in sight,  
 With scenes of beauty and delight ;  
 Its garden's flowers, its walks, its trees,  
 Enlivened by the Hudson's breeze.

The brook meandering round these flows,  
 And to the Hudson gently goes ;  
 Its hills, its walks, its trees, its vales,  
 Might furnish themes for songs and tales.

The Poet's eye might here admire  
 The scenes around with kindling fire,  
 And with imagination bright  
 Could pictures draw to give delight.

When on the landscape round you look,  
 You see a mill-pond and a brook,  
 Which flows along among the trees  
 Made leafless by the Autumn's breeze.

The towns and villages around  
 Send forth a distant, cheerful sound ;  
 Minds are by moving objects stirred,  
 And sounds are in the distance heard.

The PALISADES at distance rise,  
 With colors round of different dyes ;  
 Hook MOUNTAIN appears in view,  
 Shining with brilliant colors too.

SING SING appears in distant view ;  
 PIERMONT, NYACK, its mountain, too ;  
 And ROCKLAND LAKE, also well known,  
 To notice and to fame have grown.

The sun shines brightly in the west,  
 In woodland groves we pause to rest ;  
 Upon a gently flowing stream  
 There come the rays of the sun's beam.

Over the rocks the waters go,  
 And onward in the current flow ;  
 The trees in beauty spread around,  
 The dashing spray the only sound.

Here, by POCANTICO's clear brook,  
 A pleasant walk one day we took ;  
 The flowers were blooming on the trees,  
 Stirred softly with the Summer's breeze.

SLEEPY HOLLOW has a good name  
 That is not all unknown to fame ;  
 To its fame a song we would sing,  
 And bring a novel offering.

It is a fine sequestered glen,  
 That has its dwellings both of men  
 And women, too, who spend life's hours  
 Around its fair and shady bowers.

The POCANTICO flows along,  
 A stream that is unknown to song ;  
 An ancient Church stands near the brook,  
 At which the traveler can look.

Across the brook there is a bridge,  
 As you go up the rising ridge ;  
 The hills and valleys gently blend,  
 And Summer's showers on them descend.

Corn and grain on fields here grow,  
 As changing seasons onward flow ;  
 Along the road upon the green,  
 A rural school-house can be seen.

Legends of scenes, in times of old,  
 Are of this valley often told ;  
 These wondrous tales on life's record,  
 Do much amusement oft afford.

We cannot in these lines relate  
 The legends now of ancient date ;  
 Irving's Sketch-Book describes the same,  
 And sends them on the wings of Fame.

The lightning's flash, the thunder's roar,  
 Sometimes are felt along the shore ;  
 The stricken oaks and locusts show  
 These trees have felt the lightning's glow !

PART IV.—*The Ancient Church near the Cemetery.*

An ancient Church of much renown  
Is seen just north of Tarrytown,  
Where worshippers, in former days,  
Engaged in public prayer and praise.

The Church for most two hundred years  
Has stood—as from a stone appears ;  
The table and Communion plate  
Are also of quite ancient date.

Not often now is heard the sound  
Of Gospel Truth within its ground ;  
The Church could not now well contain  
The crowds that would admittance gain.

The Churches here with joy around  
Send forth the Gospel's joyful sound,  
Where the voice of prayer we hear  
Through all the seasons of the year.

The Sabbath here meets with respect,  
Though many do its voice neglect,  
And oft in evil spend the day,  
When Christians meet to God to pray.

The light of knowledge spreads around,  
And Public Schools, too, here are found ;  
'Tis education forms the heart,  
And can good principles impart.

The vines spread round the Church's sides,  
Below the brook on gently glides ;  
The flowers rise upon the ground,  
And Robin Red-Breast sings around.

Upon these bright and cheerful flowers  
The dew-drops shine with Summer's flowers ;  
And from the trees around you hear  
The notes of birds with warblings near.

The Manor House, an ancient dome,  
Stands near the bridge—the transient home

Of WASHINGTON, in days of yore,  
When he our country's honours bore.

Upon the hill, and all alone,  
There stands a famous house of stone,  
Upon the top there is a bell,  
That often tolls the funeral knell.

The house stands by the entrance gate,  
And more my verse would not relate ;  
There frequent calls are daily made,  
In Summer's heat a quiet shade.



PART V.—*The Sleepy Hollow Valley.*

Lo ! the Cemetery is seen  
Through the groves that intervene,  
With woodlands and distant fields,  
And Autumn's flowers, its beauty yields.

Many stones at distance rise,  
That point the pilgrim to the skies ;  
On them appear the lines of verse,  
That visitants can oft rehearse !

'Tis Summer : Nature's brilliant beams  
Shines bright on woodlands and on streams ;  
No noise around from War's alarms,  
When minds can turn to Nature's charms.

The verdant trees and flowers bloom  
Around the scene of Church and Tomb ;  
How pleasant is the evening's light  
That shines on Nature clear and bright.

The sun shines clear above the hills,  
While morning dew on flowers distils ;  
The air is vocal all around  
With songs of birds and Music's sound.

Here plain inscriptions do appear  
Upon the monuments rising near,

And words of Bible light and truth  
Can here the earnest reader soothe.

The name of IRVING here we see  
Amidst the vast variety,  
And moss grown monuments around,  
Of ancient date, rise o'er the ground.

The faithful Pastor has a name,  
Who formerly did truth proclaim,  
Whose influence is felt and known  
In hearts from Christian doctrines sown.

The name of SMITH the eye can see  
Near to the Church, and by a tree ;  
The tomb-stone with its verse sublime  
Lifts up the soul from earth and time.

The verse is from the Word of God,  
Who spread the universe abroad—  
"I AM THE LIFE"—the Savior's voice—  
With faith in it, hearts will rejoice.

Friendship's feelings are exprest  
For them who in their graves do rest ;  
Souls through the Gospel's light shall rise  
To joy and glory in the skies !

The Church-bell's motto you can read,  
The inscription very good indeed—  
"If God be with us, who can be  
Against us" in adversity ?

Heroes of Columbia's wars,  
Who victory won with death and scars,  
Sleep in the silent Cemetery,  
Where memory's monuments we see.

Like thousands who have gone to rest  
With all the Nation's honors blest,  
These soldiers brave in silence sleep,  
While Angels round their vigils keep.

The IRVING INSTITUTE, on rising ground,  
Gives a fine prospect all around ;

The mountain's azure-colored hue  
Presents enchantment to the view.

The Public Schools their light impart, <sup>1</sup>  
To give instruction to the heart,  
And youthful minds the lessons learn,  
That teach right conduct to discern.

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## CANTO II.

PART VI.—*The Monument respecting the Capture of Major Andre,  
in the American Revolution.*

In sight appears the Monument  
Which celebrates a great event,  
When Treason foiled in wicked arts  
Gave joy to many thousand hearts.

Tradition still events relate  
Of interest to the United States ;  
In the Hudson the *Vulture* came,  
And with the ship its deeds of fame.

MAJOR ANDRE, with his horse,  
Was captured by the water-course  
That crossed the road ; a spy, who came,  
Well known to story and to fame.

The Andre Brook runs down the hill,  
And onward flows a gentle rill ;  
Its waters to the Hudson flow,  
And trees and flowers in beauty grow.

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PART VII.—*The Union Banner and Pole of Liberty.*

Near the Monument you see  
The famous Pole of Liberty ;  
The Stars and Stripes by it unfurled,  
Win admiration from the world.

The Union Banner, when assailed,  
 Its enemies have not prevailed ;  
 Its eagle, soaring far on high,  
 Did Treason's foes and arts defy !

When War has spread around alarms,  
 Success has crowned the Nation's arms ;  
 And Freedom's Flag, still high unfurled,  
 Will move in triumph round the world !

The Andre Brook here gently flows,  
 And onward to the Hudson goes  
 With beauty through the shade of trees,  
 Enlivened by the summer's breeze.

The robins fly on trees around,  
 The bobalink gives a cheerful sound ;  
 The geese go to the brook near by,  
 The swallows rise to chimnies high.

The notes are heard from gentle dove,  
 The sea-gulls round the Hudson move,  
 And often in the evening's dark  
 Flies round and round the meadow-lark.

Imagination feels the force  
 Of Nature's motion, life and course ;  
 What glory is thus spread abroad  
 Through all the universe of God.

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PART VIII.—*The Croton Aqueduct and Scenery around.*

The CROTON AQUEDUCT we see,  
 With Nature's bright variety ;  
 Its monuments of stone appear  
 Upon the landscape far and near.

These water-works, our minds presage,  
 Will be the wonder of the age  
 That time alone can rightly prize,  
 As year by year their worth will rise.

The scene is full of life around,  
 And prancing horses tread the ground ;  
 There glides along the express car,  
 That bears the traveler afar.

The sky is clear, the air serene,  
 And Nature's beauty crowns the scene,  
 And various charms around arise,  
 In earth, in air, in sea, in skies.

The mountains in the distant view  
 Present their azure-colored hue ;  
 And sparkling with the sunbeam's ray  
 Appears the wide and spacious bay.



PART IX.—*The Spirit of Improvement, and Tappan Zee.*

St. Mark's corner-stone is laid,  
 With laurels that will not quickly fade,  
 In memory of a life and name  
 Whose genius is well known to fame.

The Church with beauty here will rise,  
 And pointing upward to the skies  
 Will call its crowds on Sabbath hours,  
 To worship God within its towers.

Here may the traveler come to rest,  
 And be with God's vast mercy blest,  
 And find a Christian sanctuary,  
 Where light and holiness shall be.

Within its walls, oh, long be heard  
 Immanuel's high and holy word,  
 Where people shall their honors bring,  
 And with salvation's accents sing.

Beauty's colors shine and rise,  
 And Music's voice ascends the skies ;  
 Their light the mind and heart can cheer  
 Through all the changes of the year.

Lo ! Winter comes with clouds and snows,  
Keen from the north the cold wind blows ;  
Autumn's sounds are heard no more,  
When Hudson's waves cease on the shore.

A flour-mill and factories,  
Attract the observer's mind and eyes ;  
In the mill-pond some accident  
Has sorrow to a loved home sent !

The memory of the magic tales  
In the known Sketch-Book still prevails,  
The legends still attract the heart,  
And pleasures and delight impart !

PART X.—*The Sublimity and Beauty of Views at a Distance.*

How beautiful the Hudson's stream,  
When fall on it the sun's bright beam,  
And how sublime when billows roar,  
And dash successive on the shore !

The charms of beauty please the eye  
Like rainbow in the summer's sky ;  
Its charms do often pass away  
Like rainbow with its passing ray !

'Tis Virtue's beauty that will rise  
Superior to the earth and skies,  
And shine with everlasting light,  
In scenes of glory ever bright.

Give me the beauty of the heart,  
Which hope of glory can impart,  
And through the course of life below  
Religion's joy and peace will flow !

Sweet are the charms of Virtue's light  
That shine in Sorrow's darkest night ;  
Bright is the beauty of the soul,  
That cannot die while ages roll.

The cherry trees with blossoms rise,  
 The garden's flowers attract the eyes ;  
 Geraniums and marigold  
 Do their attractions bright unfold.

The chestnut flowers with beauty, too,  
 Open their pleasures to the view ;  
 And grape-vines spread their branches round,  
 And birds send out a lively sound.

Nature upon the brook has made  
 A charming, beautiful cascade ;  
 When rains upon the rocks appear,  
 A sounding water-fall you hear.

Near the brook, and down the hill,  
 There stands a new, high spinning-mill,  
 And locust-trees and willows grow,  
 And onward moving waters flow !

Sometimes the rainbow, rising high,  
 Extends its arch around the sky ;  
 Oft beautiful it there appears,  
 Turning the thoughts to early years.

The Andre Brook flows down the hill,  
 A gently flowing, pleasing rill ;  
 It through the woodlands gently flows,  
 And onward to the Hudson goes !

A little Church stands near the brook,  
 At which, in passing o'er, we look,  
 When Sabbath sounds attract the ear,  
 And words of light we sometimes hear.

The waters of POCANTICO  
 Along through SLEEPY HOLLOW flow ;  
 A bridge is built across its tide,  
 Where passing visitants oft ride.

The locust and the elm trees grow  
 Where POCANTICO's waters flow ;

They cast their branches all around,  
And spread a shade upon the ground.

The legends of the Sleepy Vale  
Are known by life's historic tale,  
And various incidents impart  
Lessons of wonder to the heart !

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PART XI.—*The Lessons of Life applied to the Promotion of  
Happiness.*

The soul expands to truth sublime,  
With thoughts that mark the wrecks of Time ;  
And raise its views beyond the skies,  
Where light and glory ever rise !

What is Earth's highest rank and power ?  
Life's scenes are like a fading flower ;  
When shadows on Life's prospects roll,  
How much does Virtue cheer the soul.

Our early friends have gone away  
To scenes of Life's eternal day ;  
No more their voice of love we hear,  
Nor shall their names excite a tear !

How sweet is Friendship to the soul,  
When storms of life around us roll !  
How bright does Beauty's star arise,  
Its light sheds splendor on the skies !

When dearest Friendship does depart,  
The best of thoughts arouse the heart,  
And weeping o'er Affection's Urn,  
We know they never can return !

Why should we mourn o'er friendship gone ?  
Their work of life and love is done ;  
*Think, oh think* of joys on high,  
Where Friendship dwells beyond the sky !

PART XII.—*The Valedictory Address of the Poem.*

Our life is like a summer flower,  
That fades before the evening's hour ;  
Its joys, its hopes, its griefs, its tears,  
Depart with life's revolving years !

How sweet the fragrant morning flower,  
Refreshed with dew-drops and with shower ;  
We oft can see at summer's morn  
The rose with beauty and its thorn !

The mind enjoys bright Nature green,  
When love and beauty cheer the scene ;  
Sweet Music's tones can thrill the heart,  
And Life's high impulse can impart.

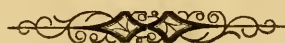
Go, then, enjoy in Friendship's bowers  
The charms of life with Beauty's flowers,  
And when light's beams the skies adorn,  
Improve with Science Life's bright morn !

Then, like the rainbow round the skies,  
Shall joys in life's misfortunes rise ;  
Hope will expand and raise the soul,  
When clouds and darkness round it roll.

Improve life's ills with joy and love,  
Apply the mind the world to move ;  
Let life its talents so employ,  
That earth may feel a thrill of joy.

Let Science, Glory, Honor, Fame,  
And Virtue shine around life's name,  
And through the changes of life's hours,  
Let knowledge well employ life's powers.

With learning joys expand the soul,  
When shadows do on Nature roll ;  
And with eternal hope sublime,  
Rise far above the scenes of Time !



## NOTES ON THE POEM.

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- 1.—Inscription on the Tomb of Washington Irving : "WASHINGTON IRVING,  
Born April 3d, 1783 ; Died November 28th, 1859."
- 2.—The Reformed Dutch Church, erected by Frederick Phillips and his  
wife Catharine Van Cortland, A. D. 1699.
- 3.—Thomas G. Smith, Pastor of the Reformed Dutch Church for twenty-  
nine years, died April 11th, 1837.
- 4.—Inscription on the Monument in relation to Major Andre, Tarrytown :  

" On this spot, Sept. 23d, 1780, Major John Andre, Adjutant-Gen-  
 eral of the British Army, was captured by John Paulding, David  
 Williams and Isaac Van Wart, all natives of this County.  
 History has told the rest. The people of Westchester County  
 have erected this Monument as well to commemorate a  
 great event as to testify their high estimation of the in-  
 tegrity and patriotism, which, rejecting every  
 temptation, rescued the United States from  
 most imminent peril, by baffling the arts of  
 a spy and the plots of a traitor. Dedicat-  
 ed October 7th, 1853."
- 5.—The Corner-Stone of St. Mark's Church, Rev. E. Guilbert, Pastor, was  
laid by the Bishop of the Diocese, July 5th, 1866, with an Address  
by Rev. S. H. Tyng, D. D.
- 6.—Christ's Church, Rev. I. S. Spencer, Pastor.
- 7.—There are two Reformed Dutch Churches, two Methodist, one Baptist,  
and a Catholic Chapel in Tarrytown.
- 8.—Irving Institute is a Classical and Commercial Boarding School for  
Boys. D. S. Rowe, Principal.
- 9.—General Washington's Headquarters and the Stoue Building, in Tap-  
pantown, Rockland County, where Major Andre was kept before his  
execution, are memorable relics of the times of the American Revolu-  
tion.
- 10.—The Rockland Female Institute, one Reformed Dutch Church, Rev.  
Uriah Marvin, Pastor ; one Presbyterian, Rev. Joseph Cory, Pastor ;  
one Episcopal, Rev. F. Babbitt, Pastor ; one Methodist, Rev. B. O.  
Parvin, Pastor ; and one Baptist, Rev. F. Greaves, Pastor, are in  
Nyack, Rockland County.



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